

Budget. For many years, Alice has been a steady and strong voice for fiscal discipline, and she deserves much credit for helping usher in a new era of budget surpluses.

Alice has a deep and abiding commitment to the city of Washington, DC. Her work and advice have played a critical role in helping turn around the finances of our Capital City and putting the District in a better position to reshape its future. I am glad that she will continue her work as Chair of the DC Financial Assistance Authority. I thank Alice for her dedication and hard work and wish her well in the future.

Statement on the Decision To Extend Normal Trade Relations Status With China

June 3, 1999

I have decided to renew Normal Trade Relations (NTR) status with China, so that we will continue to extend to China the same trade treatment we provide to virtually every other country on Earth. Maintaining NTR with China, as every U.S. President has done since 1980, will promote America's economic and security interests, and I urge Congress to support this decision.

NTR with China is good for Americans. Our exports to China have quadrupled over the past decade. Exports to China and Hong Kong support some 400,000 American jobs. Revoking NTR would derail ongoing negotiations to increase our access to China's market and to promote economic reforms there.

Trade also remains a force for social change in China, spreading the tools, contacts, and ideas that promote freedom. A decade ago at Tiananmen, when Chinese citizens courageously demonstrated for democracy, they were met by violence from a regime fearful of change. We continue to speak and work strongly for human rights in China. A continued policy of principled, purposeful engagement reinforces these efforts to move China toward greater openness and broader freedom. This is the path to lasting stability and prosperity for China, to a future that will benefit the Chinese people—and the American people.

We pursue engagement with our eyes wide open, without illusions. We continue to speak frankly about our differences and to firmly protect our national interests. A policy of disengagement and confrontation would only strengthen those in China who oppose greater openness and freedom.

Therefore, I am committed to bringing China into global structures, to promote China's adherence to global norms on human rights, weapons of mass destruction, crime and drugs, immigration, the environment, and on trade. I am determined to pursue an agreement for China to join the World Trade Organization on viable commercial terms. This is not a favor to China but a means of opening and reforming China's markets and holding China to the rules of the global trading system—developments that will benefit America. Accordingly, I am prepared to work closely with Congress to secure permanent NTR status for China in the context of a commercially strong WTO agreement.

NOTE: The Internal Revenue Service Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998, Public Law 105-206, section 5003, changed the term "most-favored-nation" status to "normal trade relations" status.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Report on Cyprus

June 3, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

In accordance with Public Law 95-384 (22 U.S.C. 2373(c)), I submit to you this report on progress toward a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus question covering the period February 1, 1999, to March 31, 1999. The previous submission covered events during December 1998 and January 1999.

The United States remains actively engaged in efforts to promote a negotiated settlement to the Cyprus dispute, under U.N. auspices and on the basis of a bizonal, bicomunal, federal solution. Secretary Albright underscored the U.S. commitment to finding a comprehensive solution to Cypriot Foreign Minister Kassoulides during their February 17 meeting in Washington.

Our efforts also continued in the region. Special Cyprus Coordinator Thomas J. Miller

traveled to Turkey, Cyprus, and Greece during March 8–13, and Ambassador Brill continued discussions with the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leadership on next steps. Ambassador Miller also discussed prospects for progress with counterparts in European Union capitals and in Moscow.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

Memorandum on the Extension of Normal Trade Relations Status With Belarus

June 3, 1999

Presidential Determination No. 99–26

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Determination Under Subsection 402(d)(1) of the Trade Act of 1974, as Amended—Continuation of Waiver Authority

Pursuant to the authority vested in me under the Trade Act of 1974, as amended, Public Law 93–618, 88 Stat. 1978 (hereinafter the “Act”), I determine, pursuant to subsection 402(d)(1) of the Act, 19 U.S.C. 2432(d)(1), that the further extension of the waiver authority granted by section 402 of the Act will substantially promote the objectives of section 402 of the Act. I further determine that continuation of the waiver applicable to the Republic of Belarus will substantially promote the objectives of section 402 of the Act.

You are authorized and directed to publish this determination in the *Federal Register*.

William J. Clinton

NOTE: The Internal Revenue Service Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998, Public Law 105–206, section 5003, changed the term “most-favored-nation” status to “normal trade relations” status.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting Documentation on the Extension of Normal Trade Relations Status With Belarus

June 3, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I hereby transmit the document referred to in subsection 402(d)(1) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the “Act”), with respect to the continuation of a waiver of the application of subsections (a) and (b) of section 402 of the Act. This document constitutes my recommendation to continue in effect this waiver for a further 12-month period, and includes my determination that continuation of the waiver currently in effect for the Republic of Belarus will substantially promote the objectives of section 402 of the Act. I will submit separate reports with respect to Vietnam and the People’s Republic of China.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

Memorandum on the Extension of Normal Trade Relations Status With Vietnam

June 3, 1999

Presidential Determination No. 99–27

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Determination Under Subsection 402(d)(1) of the Trade Act of 1974, as Amended—Continuation of Waiver Authority

Pursuant to the authority vested in me under the Trade Act of 1974, as amended, Public Law 93–618, 88 Stat. 1978 (the “Act”), I determine, pursuant to subsection 402(d)(1) of the Act, 19 U.S.C. 2432(d)(1), that the further extension of the waiver authority granted by section 402 of the Act will substantially promote the objectives of section 402 of the Act. I further determine that continuation of the waiver applicable to Vietnam will substantially promote the objectives of section 402 of the Act.

You are authorized and directed to publish this determination in the *Federal Register*.

William J. Clinton

NOTE: The Internal Revenue Service Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998, Public Law 105-206, section 5003, changed the term "most-favored-nation" status to "normal trade relations" status.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders
Transmitting Documentation on the
Extension of Normal Trade Relations
Status With Vietnam**

June 3, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I hereby transmit the document referred to in subsection 402(d)(1) of the Trade Act of 1974 (the "Act"), as amended, with respect to the continuation of a waiver of the application of subsections (a) and (b) of section 402 of the Act to Vietnam. This document constitutes my recommendation to continue in effect this waiver for a further 12-month period and includes my determination that continuation of the waiver currently in effect for Vietnam will substantially promote the objectives of section 402 of the Act, and my reasons for such determination.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

**Memorandum on the Extension of
Normal Trade Relations Status
With China**

June 3, 1999

Presidential Determination No. 99-28

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Determination Under Subsection 402(d)(1) of the Trade Act of 1974, as Amended—Continuation of Waiver Authority

Pursuant to the authority vested in me under the Trade Act of 1974, as amended,

Public Law 93-618, 88 Stat. 1978 (the "Act"), I determine, pursuant to subsection 402(d)(1) of the Act, 19 U.S.C. 2432(d)(1), that the further extension of the waiver authority granted by section 402 of the Act will substantially promote the objectives of section 402 of the Act. I further determine that continuation of the waiver applicable to the People's Republic of China will substantially promote the objectives of section 402 of the Act.

You are authorized and directed to publish this determination in the *Federal Register*.

William J. Clinton

NOTE: The Internal Revenue Service Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998, Public Law 105-206, section 5003, changed the term "most-favored-nation" status to "normal trade relations" status.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders
Transmitting Documentation on the
Extension of Normal Trade Relations
Status With China**

June 3, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I hereby transmit the document referred to in subsection 402(d)(1) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the "Act"), with respect to the continuation of a waiver of application of subsections (a) and (b) of section 402 of the Act to the People's Republic of China. This document constitutes my recommendation to continue in effect this waiver for a further 12-month period and includes my determination that continuation of the waiver currently in effect for the People's Republic of China will substantially promote the objectives of section 402 of the Act, and my reasons for such determination.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

**Interview With Charles Gibson,
Diane Sawyer, and a Discussion With
Students on “Good Morning
America”**

June 4, 1999

Situation in the Balkans

Charlie Gibson. We are here to talk about a subject which really is on everybody's mind and has been the topic of conversation ever since the Littleton shootings at Columbine High. But I can't ignore the fact, obviously, that there were events yesterday involving perhaps peace in Yugoslavia and Serbia with the Serbs. Does your gut tell you we have peace?

The President. Well, I'm encouraged. I think that, first of all, President Ahtisaari of Finland, and Mr. Chernomyrdin did a very good job. They got our positions very close together and then presented it to Mr. Milosevic, and they have accepted it.

But over the last 6½ years I've had a number of agreements with Mr. Milosevic and the only one that has been kept is the Dayton agreement where we had forces on the ground. So I will feel much better about this when we have evidence that there is a real withdrawal of Serb forces and when we're moving in.

Mr. Gibson. But the word is that they've accepted the terms that we sent in, so why keep bombing them in the interim? When a bully cries “uncle,” you let him up, let him go home, you don't keep hitting on him.

The President. Well, you have been reporting about the nature of the continuing campaign. I think it's important that we continue the military action against the military targets until we have some evidence that there are more than words here. For 6½ years, we've had various agreements, but until we had the agreement ending the war in Bosnia at Dayton, the others weren't kept. And so I think that—and we've had the same problem in Kosovo. We want to know that the military forces are withdrawing, and we want to have the timetable for our people going in.

Mr. Gibson. So what is the evidence that would bring about a pause in the bombing? Is it the beginning of the withdrawal of the troops, once you see x number out?

The President. We want to see—we want to have a militarily verifiable withdrawal of the troops and an agreement about the introduction of the international force. That should come—or could come quite soon. The paper that Mr. Ahtisaari gave to the Serbs provided for military-to-military contacts. Those contacts are to occur very soon, in the next several hours, probably early tomorrow their time. And then we could proceed pretty quickly.

So, believe me, I'm anxious to end the bombing, but I want to know that our objectives have been achieved.

War Crimes

Mr. Gibson. A couple of very quick questions. Were war crimes—the war crimes against Mr. Milosevic discussed at all in the talks?

The President. I don't believe they were.

Mr. Gibson. His staying in office, were they discussed—was that discussed?

The President. That's not part of the terms that NATO set out in the beginning.

Mr. Gibson. So that question is simply left—

The President. That question is left open. Now, he is subject to the jurisdiction of the International War Crimes Tribunal, which means that if he comes within the jurisdiction of any country that is cooperating with the United Nations, they would have an obligation to turn him over. But that was not a part of the terms necessary to secure return of the Kosovars and, therefore, we have to proceed with the conditions we set out—

Mr. Gibson. And very quickly, will the troops, the peacekeeping forces, once they go in, be under unified command?

The President. Yes. They have to be. We have to have an organized, unified way of dealing with this, because their lives will be at stake, too.

Gun Control Legislation

Mr. Gibson. All right. Let me turn to the situation of kids and guns. The House, in the next few weeks, is going to start debating a bill that includes some gun control measures that were passed by the Senate. And political points will be scored by both sides in that debate.

But you and I know, don't we, really, that it's not going to make a damn bit of difference—only on the margins—in the way kids get guns.

The President. Well, first of all, I don't necessarily agree with that. I think the Brady bill has made a real difference; having the background checks matters. We know that 250,000 people, from the time I signed the Brady bill in '94 until last year, were unable to get handguns. We know just since the insta-check went in last year, another 36,000 people have been denied the right to get handguns. So closing the gun show loophole matters. Doing a background check for some other things I recommended, a background check for explosives as well—very important in the Littleton case—these things will matter.

Now, does more need to be done? I think so. I think that more does need to be done. The Speaker of the House agreed that we ought to make it unlawful for people under 21 to have handguns, and I was encouraged by that. And that's, of course, something I'm supporting.

Mr. Gibson. But even with the checks, what you can't get in the front door, so many people go around and get in the back door. Forty percent of the gun sales in this country are unregulated; nobody checks them. There are a group of kids that you're going to meet in the next half-hour who are going to tell you, "If I want to get a gun, I can go get one, and nobody's going to know about it, and I'll have it within a week."

The President. That's true, but the more we move to make such transactions and possession unlawful and the more we move against people who perpetrate them, the more success we will have.

You know, it's funny, even the NRA says, "Well, we ought to prosecute crimes. Well, we ought to make the right things crimes, and we ought to make it unlawful for children to possess these weapons. We ought to make it unlawful for people to sell them to them or to transfer to them, and we ought to close the loopholes in the law." And as we do that, we will make a difference.

Also, keep in mind that the Littleton example is not the only example that we have to be mindful of. There are 13 children a day

who are shot in America, who lose their lives, in ones and twos on the streets.

Mr. Gibson. There's a Littleton every day.

The President. So we have to make—anything we can do to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and kids, we ought to do.

Mr. Gibson. But when you went to Littleton, a friend of yours who supports you on gun control said to me in the last 48 hours, "the President," because, as he said, "Littleton has seared the national conscience. The President had a chance to roar on gun control, and he meowed," and that was a friend of yours. There are very basic measures that could be taken that people agree on. We register every automobile in America—

The President. Absolutely.

Mr. Gibson. —we don't register guns. That's a step that would make a difference.

The President. Look, let's join the real world here. You want to have an honest conversation? Let's have an honest conversation. I am the first President who ever took on the NRA. I got my party in Congress to stand with me on the Brady bill, which has made a difference, on the assault weapons ban. We are now in the process of closing loopholes in the assault weapons ban.

What happened to them when they did that? In 1994, we lost between 12 and 20 members of the House of Representatives because they were targeted by the NRA for standing up for the lives of our children. Now, wait a minute. You talk about roaring and meowing. Then I came forward with this legislation. Did this roar through the Senate? No. We passed a bill causing the gun show loophole by 51–50 because of the Vice President of the United States. Did the House of Representatives make a priority out of what was passed in the Senate and pass it right through? No. They went home before taking action. Why? To give the NRA time to lobby them, to water down what was passed.

Now, I have made it perfectly clear that I want to get what was passed in the Senate, passed in the House. Then we will come back and try to pass some more things, because Littleton did sear the conscience of the Nation. The question is not whether we have seared the conscience of the Nation; the question is whether, on gun issues, whether

the people who now constitute the House and the Senate will pass what is sensible.

And I intend to do that. But for you to say that I shouldn't take what I can get because—and instead I should ask for things that I am absolutely positive will be defeated in the Congress, is quite wrong. And to ignore the fact—and whoever you talked about that you don't want to out here—to ignore the fact that my administration and my party took on this issue when no one else would and paid a huge price for it and lost control of the House of Representatives in all probability because of it—and to pretend that this is an easy thing now because Littleton happened, is wrong. We are working very hard to pass sensible measures that will make a difference, that will save children's lives.

You say they won't save all lives. You say there are stronger measures that could be taken. You are absolutely right. You have no evidence that they could pass in this Congress.

Now, I will do my best to advocate more, but I am doing it—and I've made it clear—I want to do this in sequence. I want to pass what we've passed in the Senate in the House. Then I want us to come back with a second set of recommendations. I intend to keep working on this. I think this is going to take years. We have—the Congress is out of touch with the American people.

Mr. Gibson. But let me come back to you on that. The polls—I believe—really, the polls have shown that this country would accept registration of firearms. And yet we don't do that, and we're not fighting about regulation of guns.

The President. That's because——

Mr. Gibson. You regulate every other consumer product in America.

The President. But you want to have a candid conversation. The reason is, this Congress came to power after the 1994 elections because in critical races the people who voted for more modest things, like the Brady bill, which the polls showed the voters support, got beat. They got beat, Charlie.

Mr. Gibson. But hasn't the NRA won the debate at that point? Once we say——

The President. No.

Mr. Gibson. ——it's politically impossible——

The President. No.

Mr. Gibson. ——we can't do it——

The President. I didn't say it was——

Mr. Gibson. ——we won't propose it, hasn't the NRA——

The President. No.

Mr. Gibson. ——basically framed the debate at that point?

The President. No. I didn't say it was politically impossible. You say I should be recommending more; I ask you to look at the vote in the Senate, which historically has been more willing to deal with this than the House, and look at what we passed. We passed closing the gun show loophole which, I don't care what you say or my friend says or these kids say, is a big deal. We passed it by one vote—one vote.

And you're saying, "Well, why didn't you recommend something more sweeping?" And I told you that I intend to recommend further measures, but I'd like to pass what we have passed through the Senate, because it makes a difference. The things that we passed in the Senate will make a difference.

Should we do more? Should people ought to have to register guns like they register their cars? Do I think that? Of course, I do. Of course, I do. Now—but I tell you, the American people may have one opinion, but they elected the Congress and the Congress doesn't have that opinion.

I'm going to do my best to move the Congress and the people can move them, but we can only—how foolish would it be for me to be debating this issue when these things are before the Congress? They can save children's lives, and I should blow by them because they're not enough? I don't think so.

Mr. Gibson. I want to take you to the other room. There are some young kids in there who want to ask you about other things, about the glamorization of violence in the media, those kinds of things—about parental responsibility. We'll get to all of that. Come on in the other room, we'll do that.

The President. Good.

Mr. Gibson. Let's go to Diane in the Roosevelt Room.

Discussion With Students

[At this point, the television stations took a commercial break. Following the break Mr.

Gibson and Ms. Sawyer introduced the first of the students whose sister was wounded in gunfire in Evanston, IL. The student thanked the President for working to pass gun-control legislation and asked how effective it would be in preventing accidents like the shooting of his sister.]

The President. Well, I think, first of all, we can't say that any one law will make a difference. But I think if you look at the school shootings—and I think all of you know this, but we ought to say this to America—this is not just about school shootings, although they're very important, but 13 children are killed every day by guns on the streets, in the neighborhoods and various circumstances.

So I think there are basically three problems. You have more kids that are kind of at risk of violence. You have a culture that desensitizes and glorifies violence, and desensitizes people to it. And it's way too easy to get guns.

And so what I think we have to do is to work on all three things. And we've got to pass as much legislation as we can that makes it—keeps guns out of the wrong hands, and basically makes it harder for kids and harder for criminals to get guns. And this legislation will do that. It will help us close some of the loopholes; it will help us strengthen the background checks. It will also do something that was very important at Littleton and will become increasingly important with the Internet giving so much information to kids—it will put a lot of our background requirements for guns into explosives, too, which I think are very important. After the Littleton thing, I think we can all see that.

But I can't guarantee that. There are over 200 million guns in American society now, in a country of about 260-plus million people. But we can make it a lot harder, and we can dramatically reduce the chances that such things will occur.

[Ms. Sawyer then introduced a video which demonstrated how easily a gun could be carried into schools. The discussion continued, and the First Lady responded to several questions.]

The President. If I could just say one thing, to go back to put the two questions

together, there are some schools, some high schools, which have hotlines which young people can call if other students bring guns to school, and they know two things if they call. They know, number one, that the children will not be outed, their identities won't be disclosed if they call, and, number two, that some authority will check on the presence of the gun in the school that day.

So I think that's really important. If it's a problem in schools throughout the country, it's a specific thing that some schools have used with great success.

Ms. Sawyer. Mr. President, if I could ask you, members of gun organizations say that the ability is there to do something about kids—6,000 kids in the last 2 years in schools found to have guns, but, in fact, only 13 were prosecuted for it. Do you think there should be more prosecutions, and do you agree?

The President. I don't know. You know, I don't think—all those kids, the reason they know that and the only reason they know that is that since I've been President, we instituted a zero tolerance for guns in schools, so the kids were sent home if they had the guns.

Now, it's up to the local prosecutors to decide whether to prosecute them. But you should know that the general argument that prosecutions are down is simply not true. And Federal prosecutions are up by 30 percent of serious crimes, and overall gun prosecutions, State and Federal, are up. And gun-related crimes are down.

This is a special problem—problems of violence against children by guns is a special problem that, in my view, you can make the prosecution argument. We ought to make it harder to get guns. We ought to deal with the culture, and we ought to deal with the schools and the communities and help the parents and the kids do more.

[A student asked the President why it wasn't mandatory to have metal detectors and police in every school.]

The President. Well, I think—let me say, generally we have not had a Federal law that requires schools to do metal detectors, but what we do is we provide funds every year to help schools buy the security equipment. And I believe—when I saw that young man

there take the 12 guns out of his clothing, I thought maybe we should do more in that regard.

A lot of schools are, for obvious reasons, reluctant to have metal detectors. But I think that the schools that have them have not had these instances, basically because you can't get in—at least inside the school.

[At this point, the discussion continued. A student from Heritage High School in Conyers, GA, told of an encounter with Thomas J. Solomon, Jr., in school in which Mr. Solomon showed the student a gun. The student later reported it to school authorities. Although school authorities took some interim action, they did not pursue the issue and some weeks later, Mr. Solomon allegedly shot six other students.]

The President. What do you think they should have done?

Student. I think they should have done a lot more than they did. I think at least if they didn't, they should have called his parents and maybe had them maybe even look for it. I was going to ask you what more could be done than what's already done about a suspected gun at school.

The President. These are questions that have also been asked in Colorado because of what was in the website, the kid's website and other places. And I think it's important that people like you, as I said, have a way to make these reports, and then, you know, they're going to be systematically followed up on, either by the school or the law enforcement.

I also think it's important that when a young person like that is obviously in trouble, you not only try to get the gun away, but you try to figure out what the real problem is and what kind of help the kids need. And then it's provided in some sort of systematic way. A lot of these kids, I am convinced, could be turned away from this before it's too late if they could have been identified early enough.

And so I think we need a combination of, you know, go after the source of the—go after the guns and all that, and trying to deal with the kids. And I think—again I would say, I've been amazed in how many of these cases—I don't know what the facts are in

Pearl or in Paducah—I do know in Springfield, Oregon, because I went out there to talk to the people there, that there are a lot of people who were really concerned about that young man before this happened.

So I think—we're going to have a mental health conference with Mrs. Gore and the Vice President, Hillary and I are, in a few days, and we're going to talk about what more can be done when the kids know that somebody is in trouble, to go really help them before this happens. Just like you knew. There should have been someplace else you could go where you would know not only would they try to get the gun, but there would be somebody all over that kid, in a positive way, trying to figure out what the deal was and how to help him move away from it.

[At this point, the discussion continued. One student noted that, while youth were exposed to violence, some were more sensitive to it.]

The President. But let's go back to what Missy said. I'm amazed that any of you said you were concerned about the video games, because most of the young people I've talked to, there's a lot of support for tougher gun control and for better security and for more support services, but a lot of young people I've talked to say—they say I'm an old fogey when I talk about the movies and the video games.

But here's the point I want to make. I want to make the point Missy did. Most of the kids are fine and will be fine under any culture. It's true, they show them in Japan and Europe, and they don't have the killings. But what do we know about America? We know that in America, number one, we know more and do more of it in the aggregate. The average 18-year-old has seen 40,000 murders, and 200,000 violent instances over the media, number one—more of it. Number two, in our country our folks work harder. They travel more. They spend less time at home—on average, 22 hours a week—than they did 30 years ago. That's 2 years by the time you turn 18. Number three, it's easier to get guns.

So if you have vulnerable kids, where the line between reality and fantasy blurs, they are more likely to be influenced by this. And that's something I'd ask the rest of you to